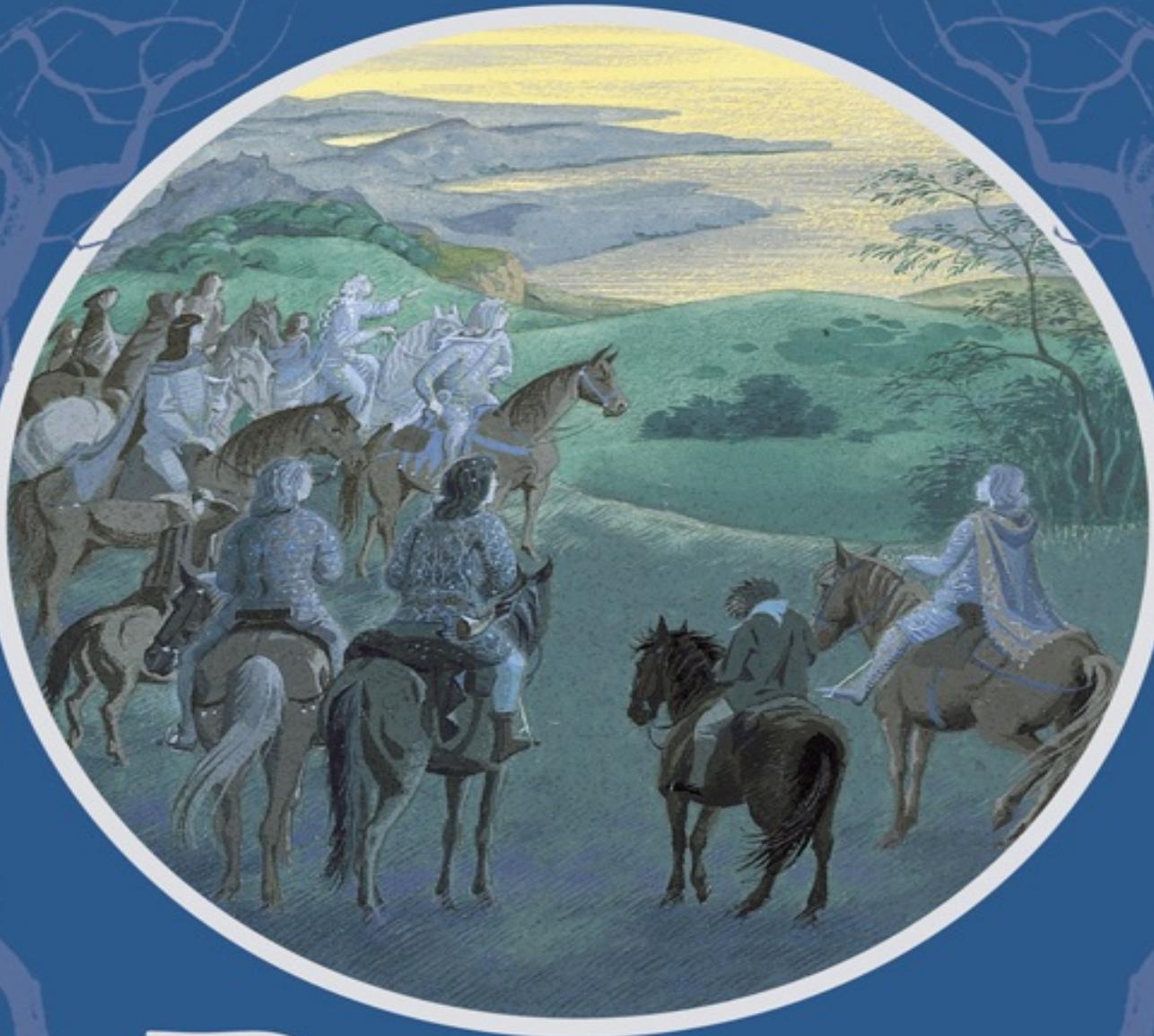


J.R.R. Tolkien



BILBO'S LAST SONG

Illustrated by Pauline Baynes



BILBO'S LAST SONG

(AT THE GREY HAVENS)

J.R.R. Tolkien

Illustrated by Pauline Baynes



Alfred A. Knopf
New York

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CIP data available upon request

ISBN: 978-0-385-75296-1 (eBook)

v3.1



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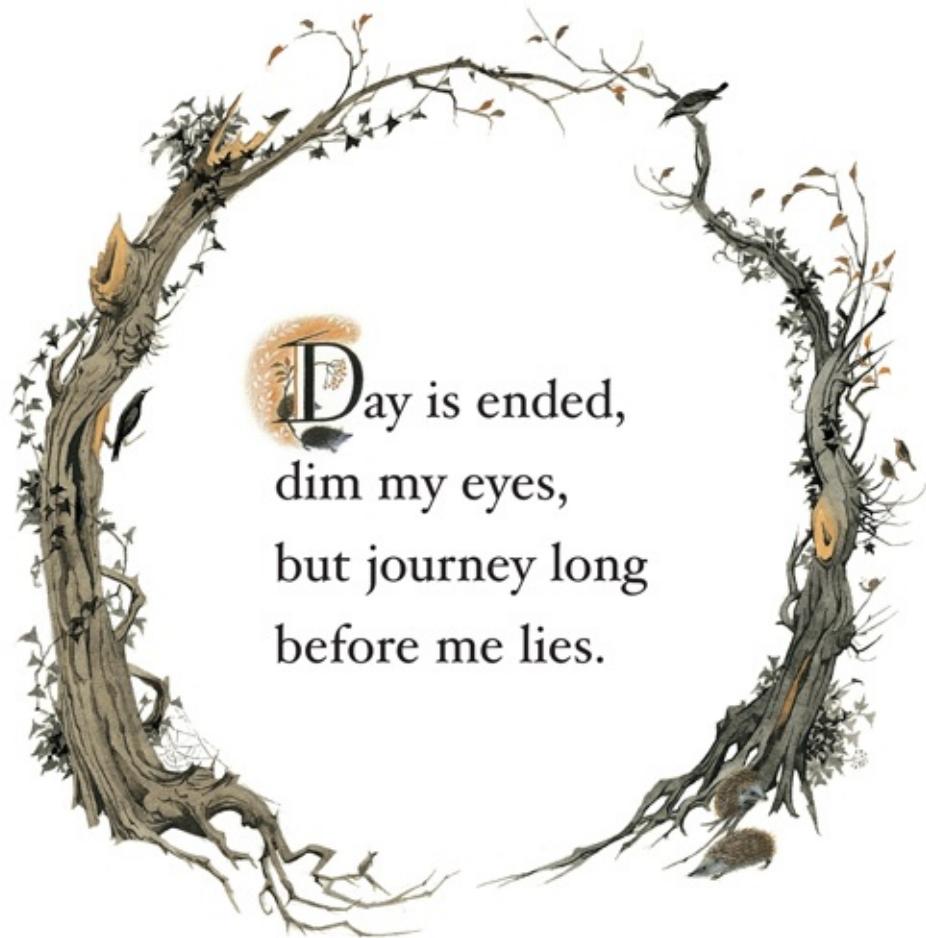
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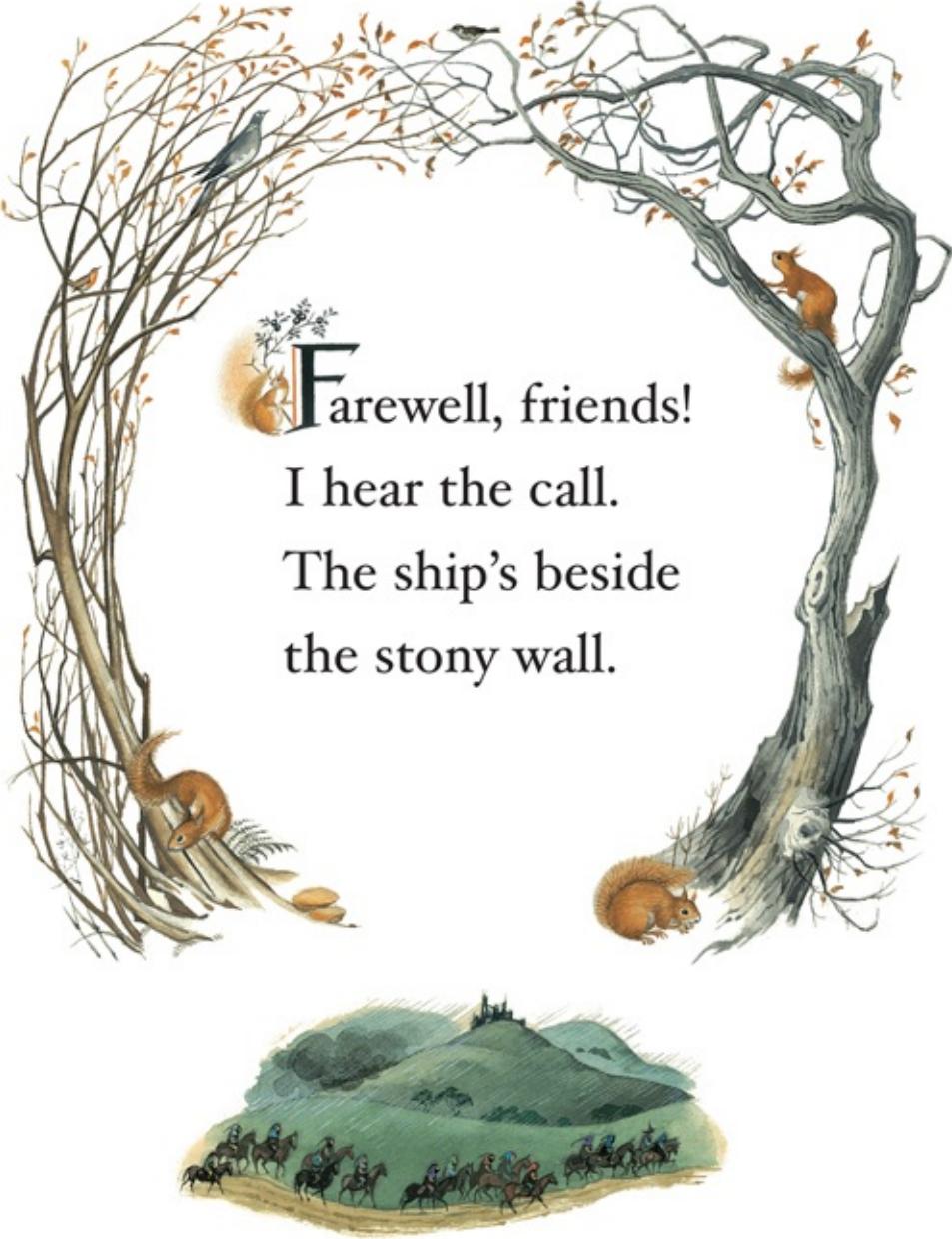




Day is ended,
dim my eyes,
but journey long
before me lies.

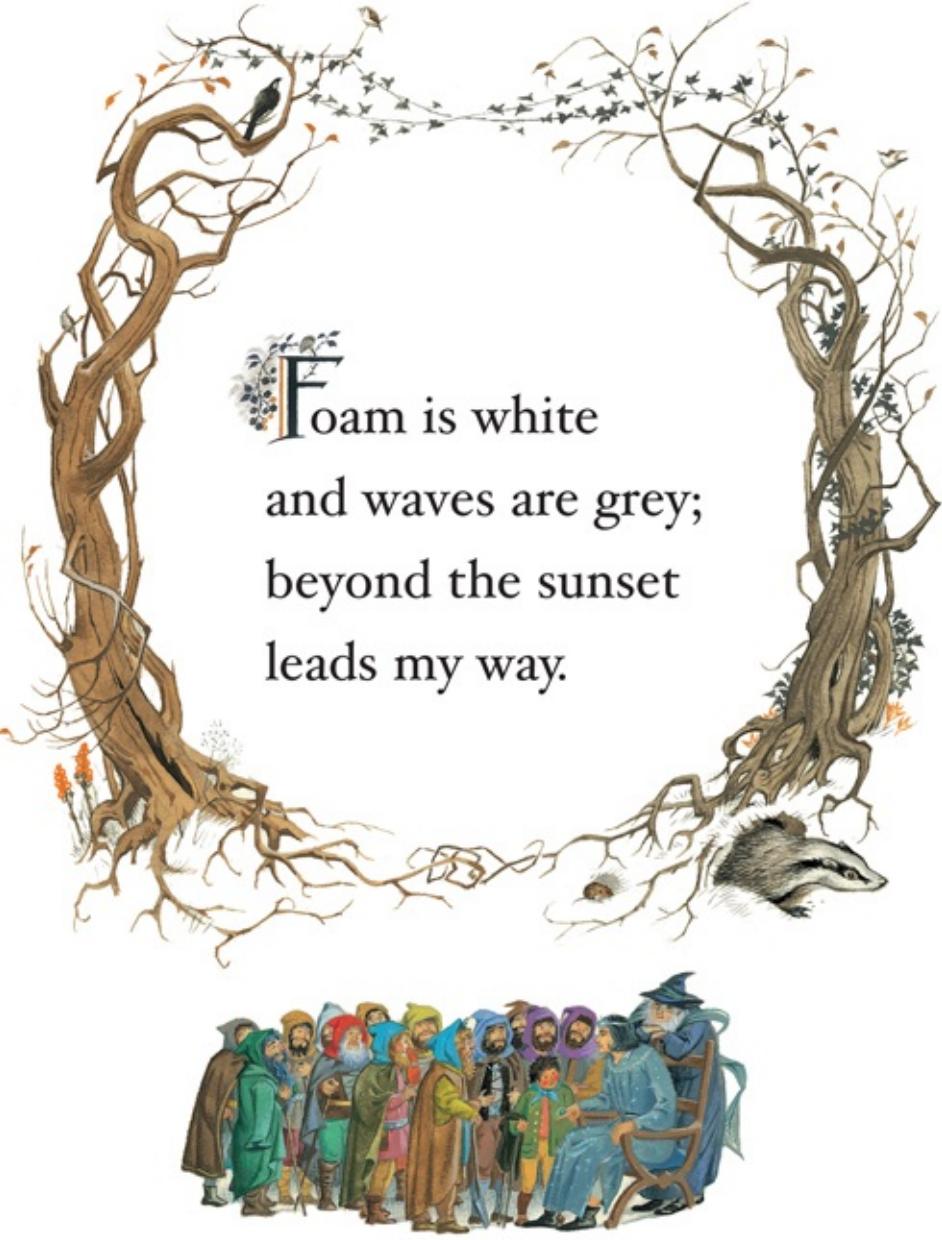






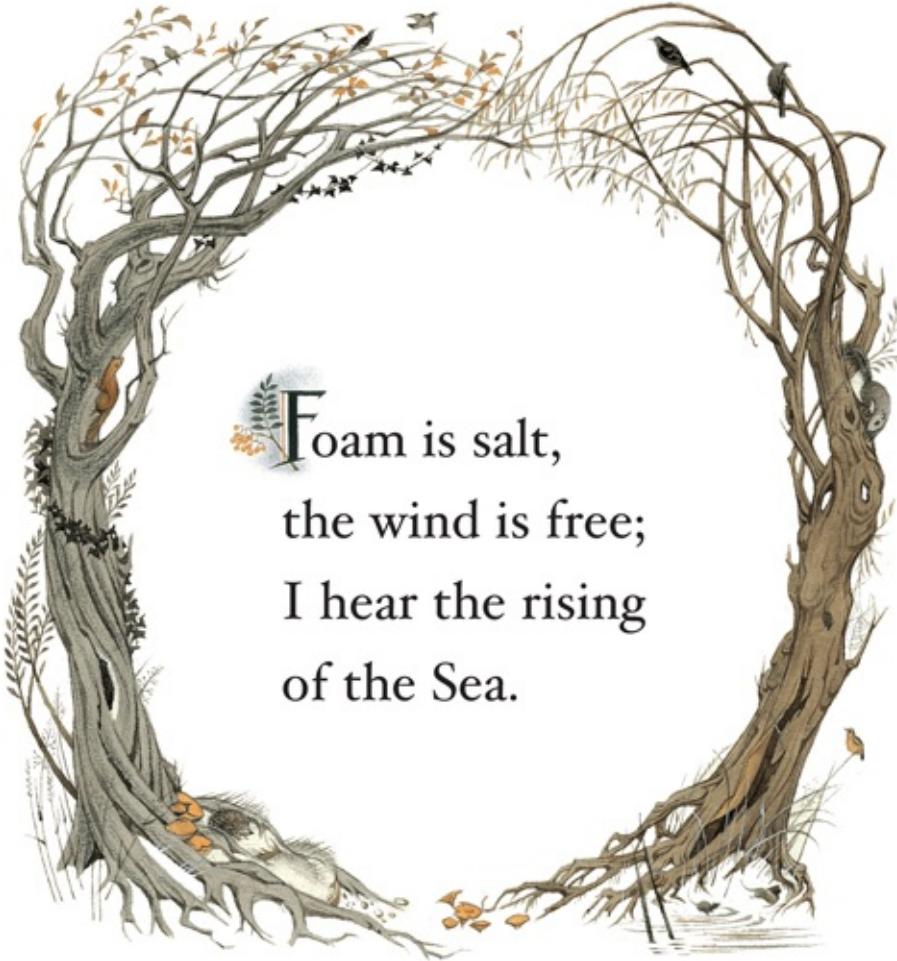
Farewell, friends!
I hear the call.
The ship's beside
the stony wall.





Foam is white
and waves are grey;
beyond the sunset
leads my way.





Foam is salt,
the wind is free;
I hear the rising
of the Sea.







Farewell, friends!
The sails are set,
the wind is east,
the moorings fret.



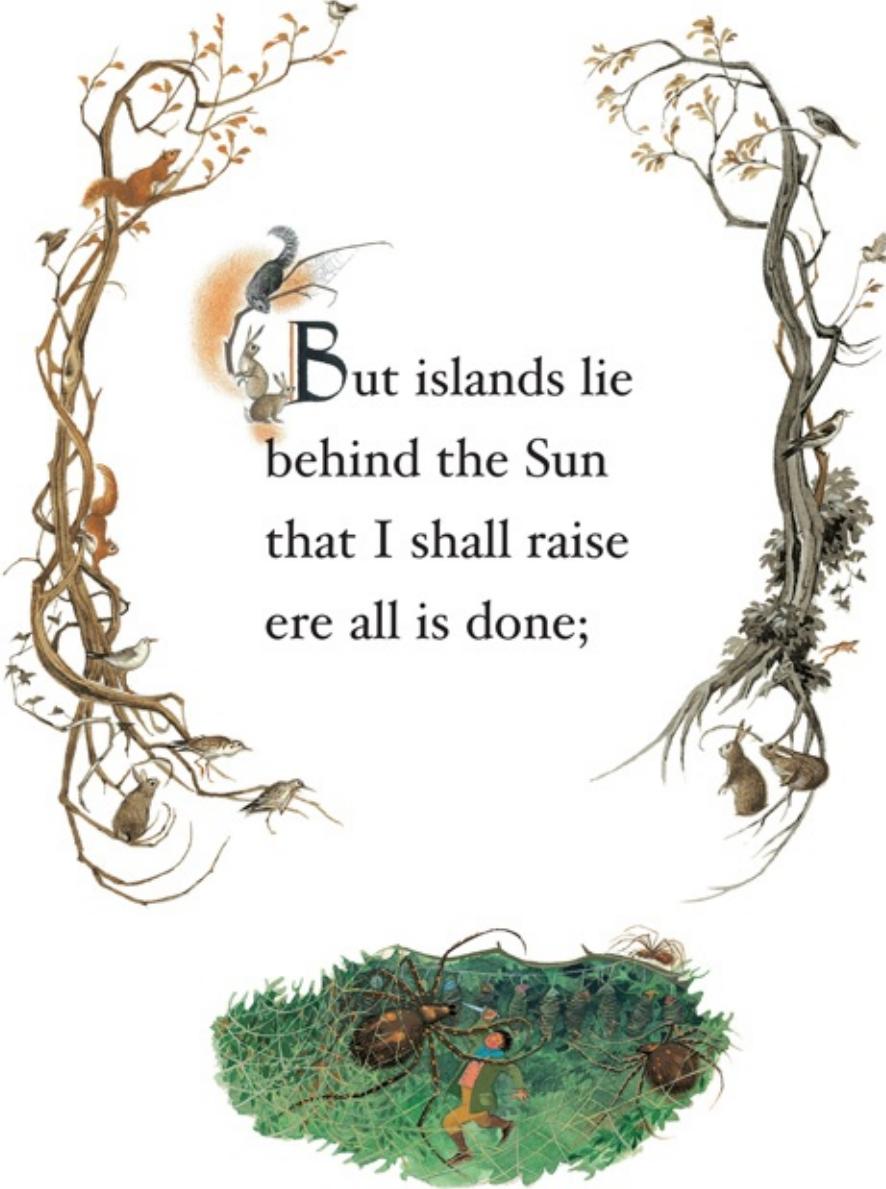




Shadows long
before me lie,
beneath the
ever-bending sky,



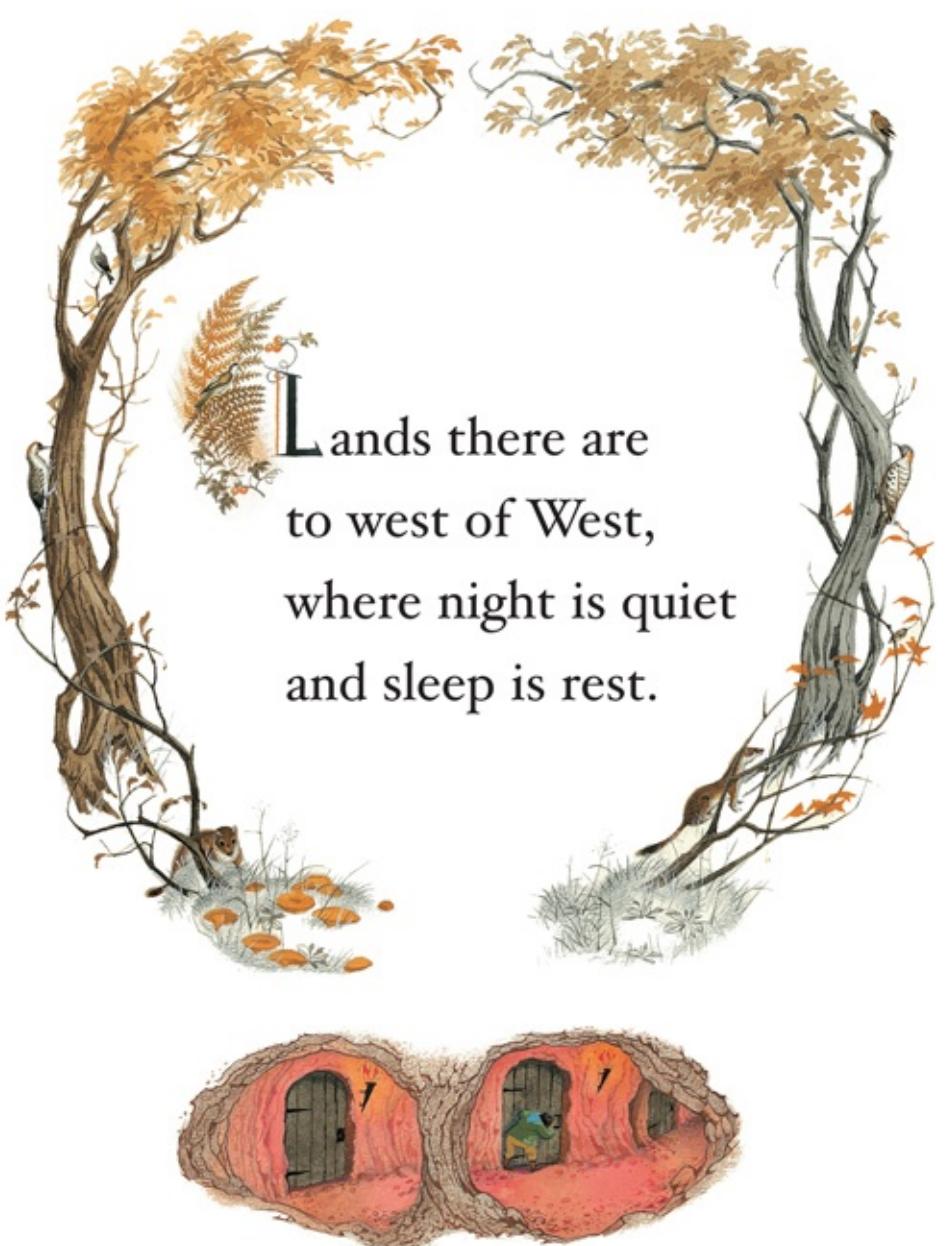




But islands lie
behind the Sun
that I shall raise
ere all is done;

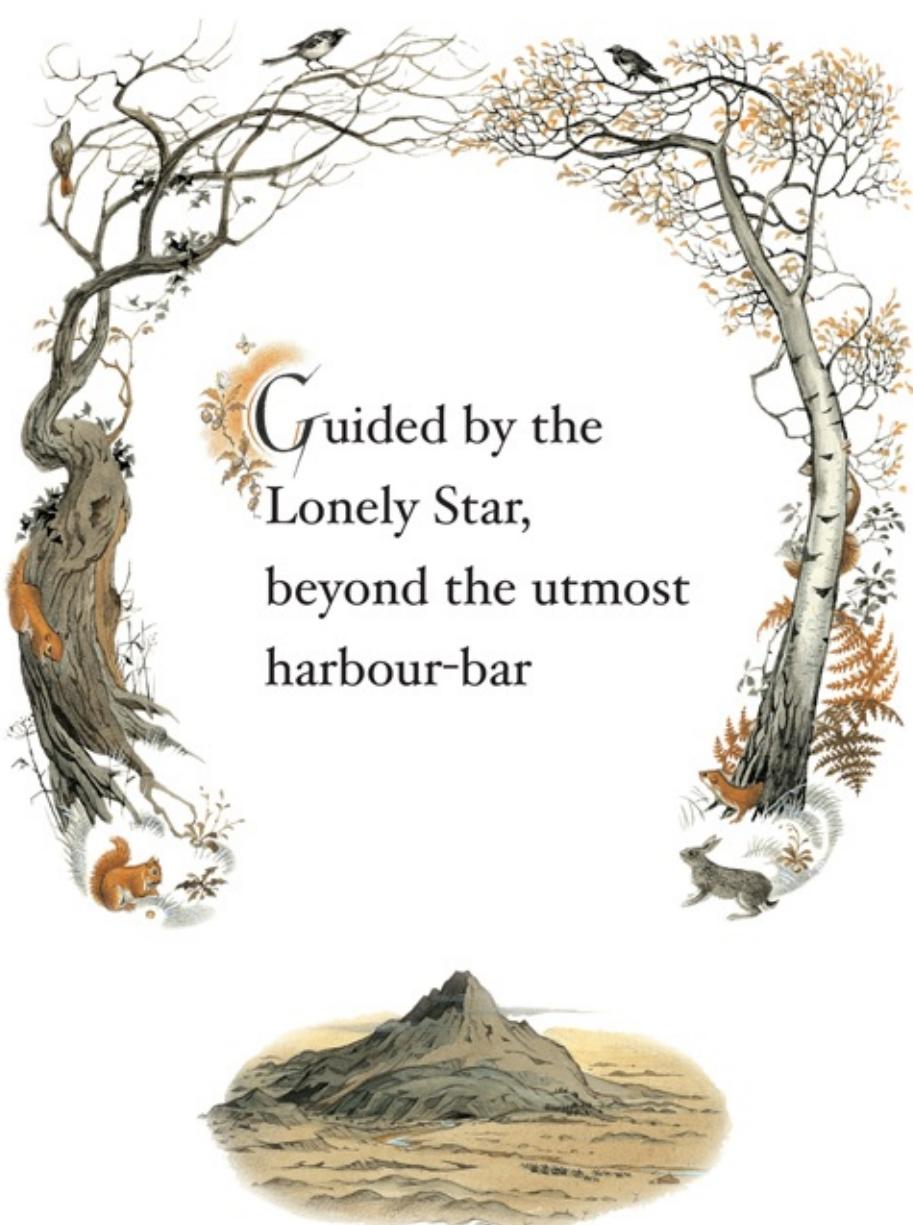






Lands there are
to west of West,
where night is quiet
and sleep is rest.





Guided by the
Lonely Star,
beyond the utmost
harbour-bar





I'll find the havens
fair and free,
and beaches of
the Starlit Sea.







Ship, my ship!
I seek the West,
and fields
and mountains
ever blest.







Farewell to
Middle-earth at last,
I see the Star
above your mast!



Notes on the Pictures



The pictures in this book spring from two sources. The large paintings are based on episodes at the end of *The Lord of the Rings* (the specific volume is referred to by its initials), in which the Ring-bearers ride westwards to the Grey Havens, where they take ship for the Undying Lands. The narrative describes Frodo and Sam riding to meet a company including Bilbo, Elrond, Galadriel and Gildor, as well as many other elves. We may assume that this party had set out from Rivendell: Elrond had told Frodo two years before that he would soon depart. (ROTK, p. 267)

The poem that forms the text of this book is Bilbo's. Like Elrond, he had indicated to Frodo that his thoughts were turning towards departure. (ROTK, p. 266)

It therefore seemed right to think of the beginning of that last journey, and of Bilbo's part in it. The first four large pictures are thus based on a sequence of events which we can only imagine, but which must logically have occurred.

The smaller pictures, running at the bottom of the pages, show scenes from *The Hobbit*. Bilbo remembers his first journey as he goes on his last journey.

Endpapers. 'None saw them pass, save the wild creatures.' (ROTK, p. 310) The picture shows the 'many Elves of the High Kindred' who accompanied Elrond, Galadriel, Gildor and Bilbo on their last journey through the autumnal countryside. Galadriel leads the procession, riding a white palfrey, followed by Gildor. Elrond rides behind Gildor, and is partly masked by the tree in the centre. Bilbo on his grey pony appears on the left-hand side, in the foreground.

1. There are several fleeting glimpses of Bilbo at Rivendell 'in his little room. It was littered with papers and pens and pencils'. (ROTK, p. 264)

i. 'A perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle.' (H, p. 11)



ii. 'All that the unsuspecting Bilbo saw that morning was an old man with a staff.' (H, p. 13)

2. Bilbo looking out of his window, thinking about making his last journey. 'The window opened on to the gardens and looked south across the ravine of the Bruinen.' (FOTR, p. 250)

i. 'Gandalf sat at the head of the party with the thirteen dwarves all round: and Bilbo sat on a stool at the fireside.' (H, p. 19)

ii. After his unexpected tea-party, Bilbo slept late the following morning. In consequence, he didn't get the dwarves' letter until half past ten – and had ten minutes to meet them at eleven o'clock at the Green Dragon Inn, Bywater. 'Bilbo could never remember how he found himself outside ... running as fast as his furry feet could carry him.' (H, p. 33)

3. It was just as Frodo and the other hobbits left Rivendell to return to the Shire

on 5th October 2019 (Shire Reckoning 1419) that Elrond said, ‘About this time of year, when the leaves are gold before they fall, look for Bilbo in the woods of the Shire. I shall be with him.’ (ROTK, p. 267) Bilbo and Elrond are here talking about that last journey. The ring Vilya, ‘mightiest of the Three’, with its sapphire stone, can be seen on Elrond’s hand.

- i. The first part of Bilbo’s journey with the dwarves was merry, but once they had left the Shire the weather turned cold and wet. They came across ‘dreary hills, rising higher and higher, dark with trees. On some of them were castles with an evil look, as if they had been built by wicked people.’ (H, p. 34)
- ii. ‘ “Dawn take you all, and be stone to you!” ’ (H, p. 42) Tom, Bert and William (Bill) Huggins – the trolls – had captured the dwarves and Bilbo. Gandalf tricked them into arguing all night about the best way to cook their prisoners, until the sun rose and turned the trolls to stone. The trolls’ cave where the swords Glamdring and Orcrist were discovered, and where Bilbo found the knife he later called Sting, is in the hill on the left.



4. ‘With them went many Elves of the High Kindred who would no longer stay in Middle-earth.’ (ROTK, p. 309) The elves who had decided to leave assemble at Rivendell. Galadriel is in the foreground on her white palfrey, with Bilbo on his grey pony.

- i. The company with Elrond, when they rested at the Last Homely House for a while. The dwarves are (from the left): Ori (grey hood), Dwalin (dark green hood), Bifur (yellow hood), Gloin (white hood), Balin (red hood), Bofur (yellow hood, at the back), Fili (blue hood, fair hair), Bombur (pale green hood), Kili

(blue hood, fair hair), Thorin Oakenshield (sky blue hood with a silver tassel, key on chain around neck), Oin (brown hood, at the back), Dori and Nori (purple hoods).

ii. 'One day they met a thunderstorm – more than a thunderstorm, a thunderbattle.' (H, p. 55)

5. 'Riding ... behind on a small grey pony ... was Bilbo himself.' (ROTK, p. 308) The ring Nenya, made of mithril with a white stone, can just be seen on Galadriel's hand.

i. 'Out jumped the goblins ... and they were all grabbed.' (H, p. 58)

ii. 'Suddenly his hand met what felt like a tiny ring of cold metal lying on the floor of the tunnel.' (H, p. 65)

6. 22nd September 2021 (S.R. 1421): 'Frodo and Sam halted and sat silent in the soft shadows, until ... the travellers came towards them.' (ROTK, p. 308) Frodo, riding Strider, and Sam, riding Bill, set out from Bag End on 21st September, and on the evening of 22nd joined the Last Riding of the Keepers of the Rings in Woody End. Frodo has a grey hood, Sam a red one.



i. 'Deep down here by the dark water lived old Gollum.' (H, p. 67)

ii. 'It was the trees at the bottom that saved them.' (H, p. 88) Having escaped from the goblins, and come out on the eastern side of the Misty Mountains, Bilbo and his friends are caught in a rock slide.

7. Dawn, 29th September 3021 (S.R. 1421): ‘They came to the Far Downs ... and looked on the distant Sea.’ (ROTK, p. 310)

- i. ‘“Fifteen birds in five firtrees”’ (H, p. 94) The Lord of the Eagles comes to the rescue of the company: the flames from the goblins’ fires can be seen in reverse at the base of the trees. From the left, Fili and Kili have climbed a larch tree, Dori, Nori, Ori, Oin, Gloin and Bilbo are in a pine, and Bifur, Bofur, Bombur and Thorin are in another. Dwalin and Balin have taken refuge in a fir tree, and Gandalf is alone in a large pine tree.
- ii. ‘“Who are you and what do you want?”’ (H, p. 105) Beorn the skin-changer talks with Gandalf and Bilbo. His bees (bigger than hornets) and beehives are on the left, and his long low wooden house with two wings is in the background, with two of his horses.



8. ‘As they came to the gates, Círdan the Shipwright came forth to greet them.’ (ROTK, p. 310) Gandalf is behind Círdan, wearing the Ring of Fire, Narya the Great, with its red stone.

- i. ‘The idea came to him to lead the furious spiders further and further away from the dwarves.’ (H, p. 138) It was in his first fight with the spiders of Mirkwood that Bilbo gave his sword the name Sting. It was a blade made thousands of years before in the hidden city of Gondolin.

- ii ‘Long and searchingly he questioned the dwarves about their doings.’ (H, p. 148) Thranduil, king of the Wood-elves, sits on his chair of carven wood in his

halls lit with red torch-light, and he is crowned with berries and red leaves. Thorin had been captured earlier, and was imprisoned separately. Bilbo (invisible because he was wearing his ring) was never caught.

9. ‘Then Círdan led them to the Havens, and there was a white ship lying.’ (ROTK, p. 310) Elrond, holding a silver harp, is standing behind the hobbits.

i. ‘First he unlocked Balin’s door.’ (H, p. 154) Bilbo found being invisible enabled him to track down the cells in which each dwarf was imprisoned. He was visible when he rescued them: the dwarves had to see who he was and be able to follow him.

ii. ‘He found it quite as difficult to stick on as he had feared.’ (H, p. 159) This picture is based on J.R.R. Tolkien’s own colour painting of the barrels floating down the Forest River.

10. ‘Up rode Merry and Pippin in great haste.’ (ROTK, p. 310) Gandalf had sent them a message, so that they could say farewell, and so that Sam should not have to go home on his own.



i. ‘They could see the Lonely Mountain towering grim and tall before them.’ (H, p. 173) As Bilbo and the dwarves journeyed towards the Lonely Mountain (Mount Erebor) they stored some spare goods in a tent (extreme right of picture). The River Running rose out of the mountain and flowed out through the Front Gate.

ii. ‘Stand by the grey stone when the thrush knocks, and the setting sun with the

last light of Durin's Day will shine upon the key-hole.' (H, p. 52) The dwarves' New Year's Day was the first day of the last moon of Autumn on the threshold of Winter. When the moon and the sun were in the sky together it was called Durin's Day.

11. 'And the ship went out into the High Sea.' (ROTK, p. 310)

i. Bilbo, invisible because he is wearing the ring, steals a cup from Smaug's vast hoard – the dragon doesn't quite wake up. (H, pp. 184–5, 189)



When Smaug attacked Esgaroth, he was fiercely resisted by archers led by Bard. Smaug's fiery breath set light to the thatched roofs, and many people, including the Master, tried to escape in boats. Bard was told by the thrush of the one place – a hollow patch on the left breast – where Smaug was not armoured with jewels and gold embedded in his hide. (H, pp. 209–12)

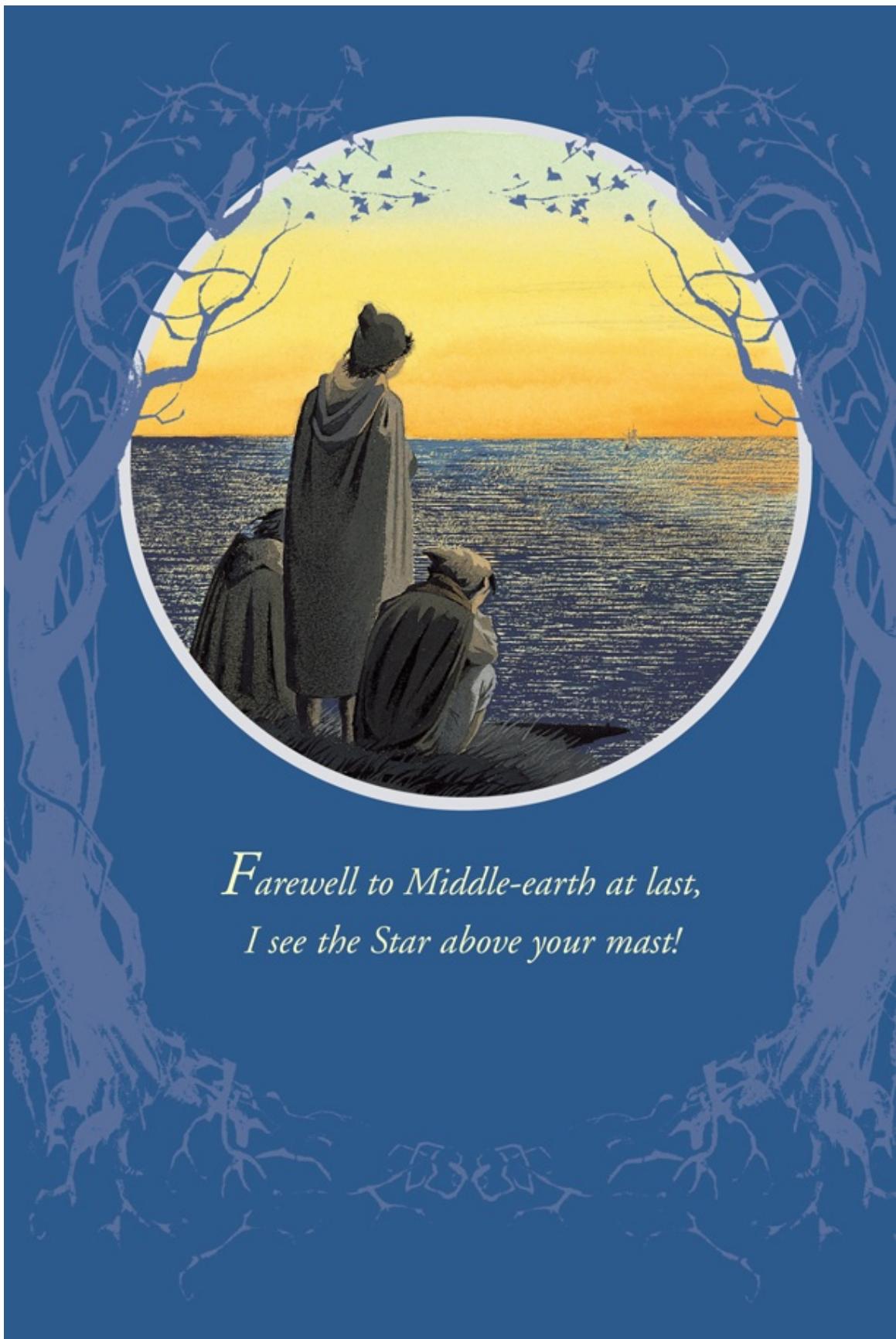
12. Evening, 29th September, 3021. The End of the Third Age. 'Sam ... saw a shadow on the waters that was soon lost in the West.' (ROTK, p. 311) The Ring-bearers depart, and from this moment the Fourth Age is dated.



J.R.R. Tolkien was born in 1892 in Bloemfontein, South Africa, but came to England with his mother at the age of three and a half. After serving in the First World War he became a distinguished professor of Anglo-Saxon and later of English Language and Literature at Oxford University. His first work of fiction, *The Hobbit*, was published in 1937. *The Lord of the Rings*, his masterpiece, took twelve years to write and was originally published in three volumes between 1954 and 1955. Tolkien said of this great work, 'It is written in my life blood, such as that is, thick or thin; and I can do no other.' The author died at Oxford in 1973 at the age of eighty-one.

Pauline Baynes was born in Hove, Sussex, in 1922 and studied at Farnham School of Art and later at the Slade. Her association with Tolkien began when he chose her to illustrate *Farmer Giles of Ham*, and she went on to illustrate several of his books including *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, *Smith of Wotton Major* and *Tree and Leaf*. As well as being Tolkien's favourite artist she was also chosen by C.S. Lewis to illustrate the *Narnia* books.





*Farewell to Middle-earth at last,
I see the Star above your mast!*